

# Investigatio Fontium



# INVESTIGATIO FONTIUM

# **Antiquitas • Byzantium • Renascentia X.**

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# INVESTIGATIO FONTIUM

Griechische und lateinische Quellen mit Erläuterungen

Beiträge der Tagung

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## Classical Literature as a Model and Standard in the *De Modo Epistolandi* of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis

The international conference to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (Augustin Olomoucký, Augustinus Käsenbrot, 1467–1513) raised a number of important questions requiring further study.<sup>1</sup> Among them there is the thorough investigation of Augustinus's *De modo epistolandi cum nonnullis epistolis quam pulcherrimis* (hereafter: *De modo epistolandi*), a “coursebook” in style to teach letter-writing, published in Venice, Italy in 1495.

The *De modo epistolandi* was published once only (in 1495), and has no modern issue. It is a short and simple manual teaching letter-writing in a clear structure. After the general description of the genre (fol. [A<sub>ii</sub><sup>v</sup>-B<sup>v</sup>]), it follows the train of thought in book four of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (1<sup>st</sup> century BC) and presents the various rhetorical devices (fol. [B<sup>v</sup>]-C), and finally gives thirteen letters in Latin as positive examples (fol. C<sub>ii</sub>-[D<sub>iii</sub>]).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> EKLER, P. (ed.): *Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis 500. International symposium to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis (1467-1513). 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013. National Széchényi Library, Budapest.* Budapest (National Széchényi Library – Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Eötvös Loránd University) 2013. The present paper has been produced with a grant from János Bolyai Research Scholarship of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (BO/00177/13/1), and with the support of my employer, the National Széchényi Library. I am grateful to the following people for the useful advice and information they have provided me with: Marta Vaculínová, Milada Studničková, Simona Kolmanová, Eszter Kovács, John Monfasani, Roman Mazurkiewicz, Michael Moser, Harald Bollbuck, Ivo Hlobil, Petr Elbel, Petr Maťa, Martin Svatoš, Štěpán Kohout, Antonín Kalous, Tamás Adamik, István Bartók, István Monok, Kornél Szovák, László Takács, András Zoltán, Árpád Mikó, Barnabás Guitman, Tamás Fedeles, Farkas Gábor Kiss.

<sup>2</sup> I used the exemplar of the *De modo epistolandi* kept in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (4<sup>o</sup> Inc. c. a. 1228). Based on the chapters in the printed book (1495), I have numbered the chapters for the sake of more transparency (I-X.).

Gustav Bauch introduced the content of *De modo epistolandi* (primarily the letters at the end) in his study written in German. In his contribution in Czech, Eduard Petrů gave an insight into *De modo epistolandi*. The present paper has two objectives: (1) to introduce *De modo epistolandi* through ample Latin excerpts, (2) to introduce the classical authors that Augustinus cites in his work and whose teachings and spirit *De modo epistolandi* relies on.<sup>3</sup>

Based on the present author's thorough investigations, the following premises need to be made:

- (1) Due to its short length, the work (*De modo epistolandi*) has a transparent structure and is a pleasant read.
- (2) Thanks to its brevity, it is suitable for teaching some general points.
- (3) It offers Augustinus an opportunity to express his own views concerning letter-writing.
- (4) It also gave him a chance to publish his private letters that he had earlier sent to various people.

Addressed to Heinrich Oseven,<sup>4</sup> the dedication letter at the very beginning gives the reasons that prompted Augustinus to write *De modo epistolandi*. As we can read in the dedication letter, Augustinus's motivation for this volume was that the letter was often mistaken for other genres (primarily orations), and consequently

<sup>3</sup> About the life and activity of Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis and *De modo epistolandi*, see: BAUCH, G.: Zu Augustinus Olomucensis. *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für die Geschichte Mährens und Schlesiens* 8 (1904), 119-136; *Rukověť humanistického básnictví v Čechách a na Moravě. Enchiridion renatae poesis Latinae in Bohemia et Moravia cultae*. Založili Antonín TRUHLÁŘ a Karel HRDINA. Pokračovali Josef HEJNÍČ a Jan MARTÍNEK. Vol. I. Praha 1966, 111-116; HLOBIL, I. – PETRŮ, E.: *Humanism and the Early Renaissance in Moravia*. Olomouc 1999, 157-158; PETRŮ, E.: Augustin Olomoucký a česká epistolografie. *Česká literatura* 49 (2001/6) 564-571; CZAPLA, R. G.: Augustinus Moravus. In WORSTBROCK, F. J. (ed.): *Deutscher Humanismus 1480-1520. Verfasserlexikon*. Berlin-New York 2005, Vol. I, 61-72.

<sup>4</sup> "Opusculum componendarum epistolarum familiarium Augustini moravi Olomucensis decretorum atque Artium liberalium doctoris ad Henricum Oseuen Decanum glogouiensem et canonicum Vratislaviensem." (fol. A<sup>r</sup> [recte: A<sub>ii</sub>!]). For Heinrich Oseven (Oswein), see: BAUCH, G.: Beiträge zur Litteraturgeschichte des schlesischen Humanismus. VI. *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*. 38. (Breslau 1904) 318-319; BAUCH, G.: Analekten zur Biographie des Bischofs Johann IV. Roth. In *Darstellungen und Quellen zur schlesischen Geschichte. Herausgegeben vom Verein für Geschichte Schlesiens. Dritter Band. Studien zur schlesischen Kirchengeschichte*. Breslau 1907, 97-101; *Kapitula glogowska w dobie Piastowskiej i Jagiellońskiej (1120-1526)*. Ed. H. GERLIC. Gliwice 1993, 221-222. I am grateful to Barnabás Guitman, Tamás Fedeles, and Roman Mazurkiewicz for calling my attention to these volumes.

similarly to speeches, they tend to divide letters into concrete sections:

Doleo interdum, mi Henrice, quom quorundam non minimi etiam nominis epistolas intueor, intra me non parum stomachari, hominum aevi nostri inerciam detestatus, qui a familiari illa puri sermonis consuetudine ita in epistolari hoc officio attolluntur, ut nullum penitus texendae orationis et epistolaris imaginis in his discrimen inueniatur. (...) Neque id solum uerborum structura delectuque quodam exquisitiore admittunt. Sed ut numeros omnes absolute dictionis implese uideantur, rem ipsam et altius etiam exordiantur, Narrationem subiiciunt, propositionem, eius deinde confirmationem, contrariorum confutationem, excursionem, et quod in oratione est ultimum, causae etiam perorationem annectunt, Eorum fortasse preceptis admoniti, qui in libellis ipsorum, quos rhetoricos inscribunt, eisdem, quibus orationem partibus, epistolam etiam depingunt. (fol. A<sup>r</sup> [recte: A<sub>ii</sub><sup>r</sup>!]);

similarly to speeches, they over-decorate their letters with rhetorical devices:

Quin etiam, ne quid ad perfectionem desit, figuras uerborum et sententiarum per omnem passim orationem ita disparciunt, ut eis tanquam floribus quibusdam et pigmentis, totus ille sermonis contextus respersus uideatur. (fol. A<sup>r</sup> [recte: A<sub>ii</sub><sup>r</sup>!]).

Augustinus does not name any writers or works. Augustinus considers these procedures wrong. Referring primarily to the styles and practice of Cicero and Seneca the Younger, he stresses that as the letter as a genre is different from other genres (historiography and orations), we must not impose their methods, features and rules on the style or structure of letters.

Augustinus will support his opinion referring to the practice of classical authors and use their quotes (fol. A<sup>r-v</sup> [recte: A<sub>ii</sub><sup>r-v</sup>!]). First he quotes Saint Jerome:

Lege ad Herennium Tullii libros, inquit diuus Hieronymus, lege rhetoricos eius, reuolue tria uolumina de oratore, in quibus introducit eloquentissimos illius temporis oratores Crassum et Antonium disputantes. Et quantum oratorem, quem iam senex ad Brutum scribit, tunc intelliges aliter componi hystoriam, aliter orationes, aliter dialogos, aliter epistolas, aliter commentarios.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Hieronymus, *Apologia aduersus libros Rufini missa ad Pammachium et Marcellam* I, 471. (PL 23 [1883], col. 428)

Next, Augustinus cites Cicero's *De oratore*:

Quis nescit, inquit Cicero, primam historiae legem, ne quid falsi dicere audeat, huiusque exedificationem positam esse in rebus et uerbis, rerum ratio ordinem temporum desiderat, regionum descriptionem, consilia euentus. Verborum autem ratio, genus orationis fusum arque [*sic*] tractum, cum lenitate quadam aequabili profluens, sine iudiciali asperitate et sine sententiarum forensium aculeis.<sup>6</sup>

Later, Augustinus cites Cicero again:

Et in Bruto de Caesaris commentariis. Commentarios, inquit, scripsit ualde quidem probandos, nudi sunt, recti et uenusti, omni ornatu orationis tanquam ueste detracta. Sed dum uoluit alios habere paratam, unde sumerent, qui uellent scribere historiam, inaptis gratum fortasse fecit, qui illa uolunt calamistris inurere, Sanos quidem homines a scribendo deterruit.<sup>7</sup>

### I. *Quid sit epistola. Eius genera. Quodque ipsius officium*

Based on the categorisation in Cicero's letter to Curio (*Epistulae ad familiares* 2, 4), Augustinus outlines the three main categories that letters may be put into, depending on their content:

unum, cuius gratia inuenta est, ut scilicet per hanc certiores redderemus absentes, si quid esset, quod eos scire aut nostra aut ipsorum intersit. Familiare et iocosum alterum. Tertium uero seuerum quoddam et graue. (fol. [A<sub>ii</sub><sup>v</sup>])

### II. *Quibus partibus constet epistola*

As explicitly argued in the dedication to Heinrich Oseven, Augustinus disapproves of dividing the letter into concrete parts in the same way as orations are structured. (Augustinus does not name though any writers or works.) Augustinus argues that in a letter we must express our ideas in a simple and clear manner, deviating minimally from the style of correct (everyday) speech. Therefore, Augustinus discourages us from the affected and unnatural practice of introducing sections in the way classical orations are structured.

<sup>6</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* 2, XV, 62–64.

<sup>7</sup> Cicero, *Brutus* 262.



Sunt, qui epistolam eisdem, quibus orationem partibus constare autumnet. Principio scilicet, quod et exordium dicitur, Narratione, Propositione, Confirmatione, Confutatione, Digressionem et Perorationem siue Epilogum. (...)

Sed falluntur mea sententia non modice, qui id artificii in rebus familiari ac domestico prope more tractandis admitti debere contendunt. Tanquam si quum per epistolam de grauibz aliquibus rebus agatur, ad oratorios protinus nervos confugiendum sit.<sup>8</sup> Neque res arduae aliter tractari possint, quam ut eas concionatoris his faleris obuestiamus.

Nonne Ciceronis Epistolae magna ipsarum parte arduas difficilesque reipublicae causas comprehendunt, quis est tamen, qui non uideat hunc in illis omnibus his partibus taliter abstinuisse, ut eum non aliter scripsisse appareat, atque familiari sermone praesens coramque dixisset.

Quapropter nullis quidem partibus epistolam distribuas recte. Quin omne id, quod describere uelis, ita simpliciter planeque aperias, ut a familiaris purique sermonis consuetudine non – nisi paruo discrimine quodam – discessisse uideare. (fol. [A<sub>ii</sub><sup>v</sup>-A<sub>iii</sub><sup>r</sup>])

### III. *Quod in epistolis scribendis plus, quam praecepta, ualeat exercitatio*

Augustinus also deals with the question whether letter-writing can be taught at all, or in other words, whether rules can be drawn for teaching and learning how to compose a letter. The third chapter of *De modo epistolandi* is about practice, exercise (*exercitatio*) and imitation (*imitatio*).

According to Augustinus Moravus, good letter writing skills cannot be acquired from course books. Only with lots of practice can you compose well. He considers a thorough knowledge and imitation of classical authors' style to be the ideal method of being able to produce simple and clear Latin letters.

In this chapter, Augustinus takes his arguments primarily from the works of Cicero and Quintilianus. He thinks that in order to acquire a grammatical correct, clear and friendly style, it is advisable to get familiar with comedy writers, and Cicero's letters. Their style and expressions will automatically come to mind when composing letters. It is also well worth reading the poetry of Virgil and Ovid.

Hallucinari mihi preterea uidentur non mediocriter, qui epistolarum formandarum praecepta quaedam iam constitui posse existimant, ut his statim rudes adhuc litterarum animos et uixdum gramatice uestibulum ingressos imbui debere contendant. (...)

<sup>8</sup> cf. Cicero, *Orator* XIX, 62.

Comicos precipue poetas sectari assuescat, quo familiaris sermonis facilius uirtutem et consuetudinem imbibat. Ciceronis deinde epistolis deditus ipsius sententias uerbaque ita sibi familiaria efficiat, ut ea si quid quandoque scribat, non uocata etiam sub acumen stili succurrant. Tum Vergilii Nasonisque placeat potissimum uersare poemata. Quaeque ex his conuenire uidebuntur in epistolarem contextum tanquam teniis aliquibus excultioribus intexere, rarius tamen hoc ipsum dum faciat, ne uel uicium, id quod summum in scribendo est affectationis, incurrat. Nonque id, quod scribit, epistolae stilum habere uideatur, sed excogitate alicuius potius orationis. (fol. [A<sub>iii</sub><sup>r-v</sup>])

#### IV. *Quot genera dicendi inueniantur*<sup>9</sup>

Augustinus Moravus – following the categorisation in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – distinguishes between three kinds of style (*tria dicendi genera*): the grand (*grave* – *hadron*), the middle (*mediocre* – *meson*) and the simple (*attenuatum* – *ischnon*). This is how Augustinus Moravus defines the simple type of style:

Attenuatum tertium, quod Ischnon graeci appellant, usque ad uulgatissimam illam puri sermonis consuetudinem demissum. (...) In attenuato autem exili, arido exanguique decipere sepiuscule. Ita enim temperatum esse debet, ut neque se attollat ad excogitatum, neque ad rude inelaboratumque demittat. (fol. [A<sub>iii</sub><sup>v</sup>])

#### V. *Qualis in epistolis stilus esse debeat*

According to Augustinus Moravus, the simple type of style does fit epistles. When writing letters, only in very well justified cases should we use ornamentation and embellishment.

Epistolaris itaque formula attenuato stilo ducetur potissimum, in quo nihil, aut parum pigmenti nihilque fuci, nisi ubi dignitas rei expostulet, adhibeatur. (...) Solutus is sit, sed non ut fugiat tamen, non ut erret, Sed ut sine uinculis, ut Cicero ait, sibi ipsi moderetur, uerba ipsius non quasi

<sup>9</sup> Chapters IV. and V. are given a thorough analysis in the Hungarian paper: EKLER, P.: "Epistolaris itaque formula attenuato stilo ducetur potissimum ..." Az ideális stílusnem kérdése Augustinus Moravus Olomucensis *De modo epistolandi*-jában. In BÉKÉS, E. – TEGYÉY, I. (eds.): *Convivium Pajorin Klára 70. születésnapjára*. (Societas Neolatina Hungarica, Sectio Debreceniensis; Institutum Doctrinae Litterarum Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae. Classica – Mediaevalia – Neolatina VI) Debrecen–Budapest 2012, 75–81.

ad filum coagmentata ducantur, sed conueniat in hoc aliquid negligentiae admisisse. Sit sermo tamen latinus et purus, nec incitatus sed placidus potius, tranquillus atque sedatus coloribus et schematibus, non nisi raro intercurrentibus. (fol. [A<sub>iii</sub><sup>v</sup>])

In the exact description of the letter style, Augustinus relies on two works by Cicero: *De oratore* and the *Orator*.<sup>10</sup>

The words echo Cicero's lines where he (i.e. Cicero) describes the ideal "Attic" orator. For Cicero, the ideal orator is calm and simple; his listeners regard his way of expression so natural that they imagine they themselves could speak like that – although imitating simple speech is by no means easy; on the contrary, it is a very hard task. The simple style is based on everyday colloquial language; nevertheless its formulation requires great care.<sup>11</sup>

It is primarily the style of Emperor Augustus that Augustinus regards as a model. Thus, he cites at length (fol. [A<sub>iii</sub><sup>v</sup>–A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>r</sup>]) the relevant lines by Suetonius.<sup>12</sup>

In the chapter, Augustinus repeatedly refers to Seneca the Younger and in each case to his *Epistolae morales* (fol. [A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>r</sup>]). The first time he cites the parts of Seneca's letter that talk about the violators of the right style. First he mentions those who love the "rough staccato" style.<sup>13</sup> Then he goes on to cite those lines of the letter where Seneca is scolding people applying other kinds of wrong language usage, namely those who look into the past and "loan" words from an earlier century (*ex alieno saeculo petunt uerba*), and those who accept the banal colloquial language (*tritum et usitatum uolunt*).<sup>14</sup>

Subsequently (fol. [A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>r</sup>]), Augustinus quotes the beginning of another Seneca letter (*Epistolae morales* 9, LXXV, 1). In it Seneca is apologising for sending Lucilius letters written with less than appropriate care.<sup>15</sup> Seneca believes that only those speak accurately (*accurate*) who wish to be affected (*putide*). Seneca's argument is that our letters should be like the language we speak when we are sitting together and walking, namely spontaneous and effortless (*illaboratus et*

<sup>10</sup> Cicero, *De oratore* 3, XLVIII, 184; Cicero, *Orator* XXIII, 77.

<sup>11</sup> Cicero, *Orator*, XXIII, 79. Cf. ADAMIK, T.: *Antik stíluselméletek Gorgiaszól Augustinusig*. Budapest 1998, 78. and 129.

<sup>12</sup> Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 86.

<sup>13</sup> Seneca, *Epistolae morales ad Lucilium* 19, CXIV, 15.

<sup>14</sup> Seneca, *Epistolae morales ad Lucilium* 19, CXIV, 13.

<sup>15</sup> Seneca, *Epistolae morales ad Lucilium* 9, LXXV, 1: "Minus tibi accuratas a me epistulas mitti queris."

*facilis*); they should not have anything pedantic and arty (*accersitum, fictum*). Augustinus closes down his chapter with two quotes from Ovid. Both of them urge to use clear, everyday and straightforward vocabulary (fol. [A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>r</sup>]):

Munda, sed e medio consuetaque uerba, puellae,  
Scribite: sermonis publica uerba placent;<sup>16</sup>

Sit tibi credibilis sermo, consuetaque uerba,  
Apta [*sic*] tamen, presens ut uideare loqui.<sup>17</sup>

## VI. *De ornatu*

The 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> chapters will be about embellishment and composition. If justified, letters may also resort to embellishment for the sake of ornamentation.

Sed quoniam oratio ipsa rudis ex se et informis est, nisi uel sententiarum uel uerborum ueluti floribus quibusdam pingatur, Nisque sibi aliquid, quo uulgarem notam effugiat, alicunde ornatus asciscat. Studebit anne omnia scriptor diligentissimus, ut in eo tali moderamine utatur, ne id, quod cauendum plurimum professus sum, effeminatam illam, delumbem et fluxam scribendi consuetudinem incurrat. Quin oratio sit uirilis pocius, et natiuo magis colore, quam externo fuco uersicolorique habitu aliquo distincta: Non ab re igitur facturi uidebamus aliquid ea in re de uerborum sententiarumque ornatu ex sententia Ciceronis precipere, non quidem, ut his frequentius epistolas respargendas uelim, sed ut ea lector cognoscens, intelligat una, quantum inter orationem intersit, quae his tanquam luminibus illustretur, et hanc epistolarem formulam, quam in affectatam dixi esse debere, puram, simplicem, apertam et planam. Pariter etiam, ut ubi res, persona locusque exigant, aliqua sibi ab his mutuanda fore cognoscat. (fol. [A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>r-v</sup>])

Ornamentation (*ornatus*) is based on three main points: *uerba*, *sententiae*, *compositio*. Augustinus first addresses words (*uerba*). He introduces words briefly, listing them with clear examples, using the following groups: *uerba simplicia*; *uerba coniuncta*, *composita*, *continuata*; *uerba propria*, *uerba inusitata*, *uerba novata*, *uerba translata*, *uerba uulgaria*, *uerba obsoleta*, *uerba aliena*, *uerba gentilia* (fol. [A<sub>iiii</sub><sup>v</sup>]-B<sub>i</sub><sup>r</sup>).

Augustinus intends to draw our attention to (1) what words are encouraged, (2) which ones should be used in moderation, and (3) which ones should be

<sup>16</sup> Ovidius, *Ars amatoria* 3, 479-480.

<sup>17</sup> Ovidius, *Ars amatoria*, 1, 467-468.

avoided in letters. In the *De ornatu* chapter, Augustinus proceeds following Cicero's *De oratore*, *De inventione* and the *Orator* and Quintilianus.

## VII. *De compositione*

The seventh chapter is useful mainly because it lists the cases that we should avoid unless we want to err against artistic composition. Composition (*compositio*) is created by three factors: *ordo*, *iunctura*, *numerus*.

De compositione. Compositio ergo, quae potissimam scribendi laudem affert, tribus rebus in primis absoluitur: ordine uidelicet, iunctura et numero. (fol. B<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>)

In the second half of the chapter, Augustinus lists the mistakes, vices (*uicia compositionis*) violating the rules of composition:

uicia compositionis secundum fortunatianum permaxima sunt ea, quae graeci iocacismum, metacismum, labdacismum, homeopropheron, dispropheron, polisigma frenosque uocant. (fol. B<sub>1</sub><sup>r-v</sup>)<sup>18</sup>

When listing the mistakes, Augustinus basically follows Martianus Capella.<sup>19</sup> An interesting exception is the quotation that comes from a work by the contemporary Francesco Maturanzio (fol. [B<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]):

et lita de fluvio labat ungula lapsa per alga [sic].<sup>20</sup>

## VIII. *De verborum et sententiarum coloribus*

The middle third of Augustinus's work is taken up by introducing rhetorical devices (fol. [B<sub>1</sub><sup>v</sup>]-C<sub>1</sub><sup>r</sup>). The itemised lessons concerning rhetorical devices in *De modo epistolandi* originate from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

<sup>18</sup> "Casus Cassandra canebat"; "Maia ipsam amo quasi meam animam" (myotacismus); "Sol et luna luce lucent albam lacteam [sic]" (labdacismus); "iuno iovi iure irascitur" (iotacismus); "Sosia in solario soleas sarciebat suas." (polysigma); "O tite, tute, tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti." (homoioprophoron); "Persuatrices prestigiatrix atque inductrices tygres." (disprophoron); "per pol quam paucos reperias meretricibus / euenire amatores, Syra." (freni); "Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum." "Sale saxa sonabant." "Torquet agens circum et rapidus uoat aequare uortex." "Et lita de fluuio labat ungula lapsa per alga."

<sup>19</sup> Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* 5 (*De rhetorica*), 514-518. (ed.) WILLIS, J. 1983, 178-179.

<sup>20</sup> Franciscus Maturantius Perusinus, *De componendis carminibus opusculum*. Venice, 1502, fol. [11<sup>v</sup>]: "et lita de fluuio labat ungula lapsa per algas".

De Verborum et Sententiarum coloribus. Verum quoniam uerborum et sententiarum colores aliquando etiam epistolae inspargendos retulimus, immoque quod de his a Cicerone proditum sit,<sup>21</sup> quam breuissime deinceps etiam disseremus. (fol. [B<sub>i</sub><sup>v</sup>])

Augustinus closely follows the text by Cornificius. There is one diversion: he does not give all the example sentences. The length of *De modo epistolandi* justifies the fact that Augustinus lists only some of the examples. The chapter follows the train of thought in the fourth book of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, with the following content: figures of diction (*verborum colores*, including the 10 tropes),<sup>22</sup> figures of thought (*sententiarum colores*).<sup>23</sup>

### IX. *De punctis, quibus epistola distinguitur*

The last two chapters (IX-X) are short and are restricted to supplying the main information. Augustinus teaches rules for punctuation on the basis of Virgil's famous epic poem, the *Aeneid*.

Interpuncta itaque principalia, quibus orationem distinguimus, sex reperiuntur potissimum. Suspensiuus, Coma, Colon, Periodon, Parenthesis et Interrogatiuus. Nam admiratiuum et exclamatiuum, quem uocant, minime hac in re necessarium ducimus. Suspensiuus, quum orationem nondum completo sensu, quietis gratia tenui quadam nota ueluti incidimus. Sic:

Arma.

Coma uero, quod incisionem appellant latini, quum sensus quidem completus est, sed tamen aliquid adhuc ad eius perfectionem exposcitur. Vt

Arma uirumque cano:

gemino annotatum puncto hoc modo. Colon, quod membrum latini dicunt, quando perfectam orationis alicuius plene compleuimus sententiam, simplici id in fine clausulae puncto annotantes, ut

Arma uirumque cano, troiae qui primus ab oris  
Italiam, fato profugus, lauiinaque uenit  
littora. (fol. C<sub>i</sub><sup>r-v</sup>)

<sup>21</sup> Formerly, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* was attributed to Cicero.

<sup>22</sup> repetitio, conuersio, complexio (...) conclusio; nominatio, pronominatio (...) translatio, permutatio.

<sup>23</sup> distributio, licentia (...) breuitas, demonstratio.

### X. *De inscriptionibus*

The most important warnings for addressing the recipient of the letter: (1) the address should be short and simple; (2) the letter writer's name is followed by the addressee's name, e.g. "Servius Sulpicius is greeting Cicero". You should avoid the "barbaric" custom of placing the more respected addressee's name before that of the writer. Naturally, Augustinus refers to classical traditions:

Quanto simplicius grauiusque latini uetustiores. M. T. C. Bruto Imperatori. S. Seruius Sulpicius Ciceroni. S. Nominibus ipsorum eorum, ad quos scribebant nomina subiicientes, Ne uel in hoc barbarum eorum morem imitari uideamur, qui maiorum nomina honoris gratia ipsorum nominibus praeponi debere contendunt. Quod neque graeca neque latina consuetudine obseruatum inuenias usquam. (...) Quod et Cice omnibus in locis obseruauisse perspicitur, ut recentiorum eruditissimorum consuetudinem praetereamus. (fol. [C<sub>i</sub><sup>v</sup>])

The thirteen letters featuring after the theoretical chapters constitute about one third of the whole *De modo epistolandi* (fol. C<sub>ii</sub><sup>r</sup>–[D<sub>iii</sub><sup>r</sup>]). With the dedication letter addressed to Heinrich Osewen, there is a total of fourteen letters, all of them from Augustinus, but each addressed to different recipients. Most of the letters are undated: they must have been composed in 1493–1494 when Augustinus was staying in Italy. They mostly constitute the exchange of news between Augustinus in Padua and his friends and acquaintances in Ferrara, Bologna and Venice. As they report on their shared literary experiences, and encounters, these letters are important documents of their friendship. They have a pleasant tone, while there are no signs of polemization. Augustinus's sentences reflect that the author does not just like Cicero's and Seneca's letters, but tends to imitate them in his own.

### Conclusion

In the first third of *De modo epistolandi* (in fact, in chapters I–VII, and IX–X) Augustinus frequently (over 50 times) mentions and cites classical (exclusively Latin) authors. The middle third of the work is the abstract based on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. In the last third, namely in 13 letters, Augustinus mentions and cites the following authors: Quintilian, Seneca, Juvenalis, Persius, Lucilius, and Cicero. On one occasion, he quotes a Greek author, Pindar (in Latin). In the letters, relatively rarely does Augustinus mention and cite classical authors (over 10 times).

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